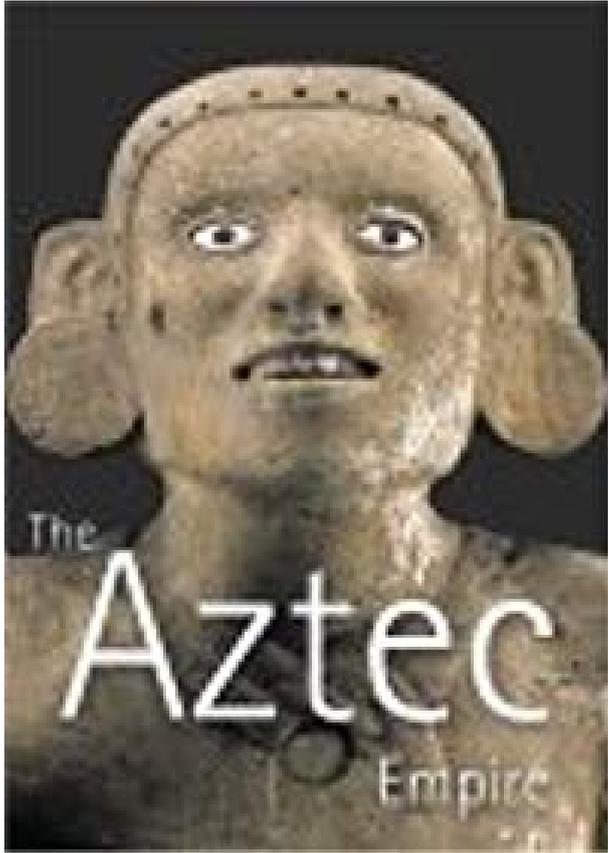


The Aztec Empire



Published:	November 2nd 2004 by Guggenheim Museum
ISBN10:	0892073217
Language	English
Pages:	376
ISBN13:	9780892073214
Goodreads Rating:	4.60
Author:	Felipe Solís Olguín
Genre:	Art

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The Aztecs were the Native American people who dominated northern Mexico at the time of the Spanish conquest in the early 16th century. A nomadic culture, the Aztecs eventually settled on several small islands in Lake Texcoco where, in 1325, they founded the town of Tenochtitlan, modern-day Mexico City. Fear warriors and pragmatic builders, the Aztecs created an empire during the 15th century that was surpassed in size in the Americas only by that of the Incas in Peru. The Aztecs are the most extensively documented of all Amerindian civilizations at the time of European contact in the 16th century. Various sources, including those of religious, military, and social historians left invaluable records of all aspects of life and together with modern archaeological inquiries portray the formation and flourishing of a complex imperial state. "The Aztec Empire," organized by Felipe Sol's Olgu'n, the distinguished curator and director of the Museo Nacional de Antropologia in Mexico City, provides not only a thorough representation of Aztec society at the zenith of the empire in the 15th century, but also the context for its development, expansion, and influence. The exhibition features more than 500 archaeological objects and works from Mexico and the United States, including jewelry, works of precious metals, and household as well as ceremonial artifacts. Many of the objects have never been seen outside Mexico, and many will be exhibited with works from the U.S. collections for the first time.

This accompanying catalogue includes scholarly essays by foremost Mexican and U.S. authorities from diverse fields and promises to become a major reference on the subject. The essays provide in-depth

discussions of various aspects of the culture, such as the Aztec view of the cosmos; their religion and rituals; daily life of common citizens, as well as the nobility; and ecological and anthropological evaluations. It also provides expanded, detailed catalogue information for each work in the exhibition.